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JPRS L/10096

4 November 1981

West Europe Report

(FOUO 57/81)



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ENERGY ECONOMICS

FRANCE

ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY SEEN 'INACCESSIBLE'

Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 5 Oct 81 pp 39-40

[Article by Jacques Ferry: "The Nuclear Imperative"]

[Text] As a prelude to the discussion that is to take place beginning this Tuesday in Parliament, the Economic and Social Council, meeting in plenary session on Tuesday and Wednesday, debated the energy record. The report that gave rise to a draft opinion had been prepared by Rene Le Guen (the general secretary to the CGT staff). The report was preceded by work done in the industrial section. The president of that section, Jacques Ferry, comments here, personally and for VALEURS ACTUELLES, on the national debate proposed by the government.

It appears to be a simple question: how can France's energy needs be met in the next 20 or 30 years; and how can it be done so that at the same time she will acquire total energy independence?

But that question brings up two others: what criteria are to be used to determine the needs that will have to be met by 1990 or 2000? How should we define national energy independence?

Energy consumption is naturally a function of the gross domestic product (PIB). But it does not vary in proportion to the PIB. It is the result of the type of growth and specific savings that are realized. In the 1960's, which were years of great expansion and cheap energy, what was called the elasticity coefficient, that is the relationship between the respective growth rates of energy consumption and the PIB, was in the neighborhood of 1. It has been around 0.8 for several years. How low can it be made to go?

The answer depends both on the extent of realizable energy conservation and the expected growth rate of the PIB. In this regard voluntarism is of course indispensable; nevertheless it does not remove all the uncertainties.

Does anyone really believe, to take just one example, that the most voluntarist policies, leaving aside their cost, will lead to less than 0.4 in 8 years, as indicated by the electoral program of the PS, the elasticity coefficient?

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It is also necessary to agree on the idea of energy independence. To understand it as a possible way for France to meet all of its energy needs without resorting to importation comes under the heading of utopia. At least for a very long time.

Although it has increased slightly since 1973, the part played by national resources in the total consumption of energy comes to barely 30%. With a deadline of a quarter of a century, self-sufficiency for our country is an inaccessible objective, as spectacular as the results to be obtained by exploiting new energy sources may be, including nuclear sources, or by increasing coal production.

In reality, energy independence means only as strong as possible a diminution, in relative value, of importations, accompanied by greater security of supply, whatever its origin.

To put it plainly, this means that priority must be given to oil, which is imported in its totality at almost 2 or 3 percent, as much to save foreign currency as to better diversify sources and quality. Currently, the oil we are importing still comes, up to at least 70 percent, from the Middle East, Saudi Arabia alone accounting for half of our total supply. It is not necessary to emphasize the risks of all kinds that accompany such a purchase structure.

Among the primary energy sources that can be substituted for oil, basically for the production of electricity (the most significant share of the final energy delivered for consumption), is nuclear energy, which must be given priority.

For all kinds of reasons: the mastery of its technology that we have acquired; the existence of important reserves of natural uranium in the national subsoil, which are maximized by the superregeneration technique; its storage facilities; its utilization cost, which is very much lower than the cost of coal and even farther below the cost of oil and even farther than that below the cost of the new types of energy, whose marginal cost is becoming prohibitive.

For all that, the nuclear choice does not rule the others out. In the first place is coal, provided that sufficiently diversified importation channels are maintained and that national production is resumed under technically and commercially acceptable conditions. The sun and the biomass, among other things, can also contribute significantly to our energy supply. There as elsewhere the field for discoveries is immense.

This is no reason to surrender too quickly to the promises of a scarcely-explored future; one part of public opinion, moreover, is deceiving itself, or being misled, when it characterizes the French energy program as "all nuclear." In 8 to 10 years nuclear energy will represent at the maximum 30 percent of our total energy resources.

It is still necessary that there be no additional delay in starting certain projects. Otherwise, neither energy conservation, which is probably already overestimated, nor new energy sources will make up the difference. The difference will be made up by imported oil and coal. Our "energy independence" will be diminished accordingly.

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ENERGY ECONOMICS

FRANCE

KINETIC ENERGY STORAGE WHEEL USE PLANNED

Paris AIR & COSMOS in French 19 Sep 81 p 55

[Article: "First Kinetic Energy Storage Device"]

[Text] The National Center for Telecommunications Studies (CNET) recently began using the first kinetic energy storage device (accumulator) on an experimental basis in its Rochefort-en-Yvelines telephone exchange. This device was developed by Aerospatiale's Ballistic and Space Systems Division from the magnetic-bearing reaction wheels it has developed for stabilization of satellites (Spot, etc.). It is the world's first such device.

The kinetic energy storage unit is installed in an underground tank near the telephone exchange. It consists mainly of a steel wheel 40 centimeters in diameter and 50 centimeters in height. The wheel weighs approximately 400 kilograms and rotates at 12,000 rpm in a frictionless manner, thanks to its magnetic-bearing suspension. In addition, the flywheel is housed in a small vacuum case. As thus installed, the device can supply 3 KW for 20 minutes.

This kinetic energy storage device's advantages over chemical batteries are as follows, according to Aerospatiale: pollution-free, more flexible and quicker recharge, instant determination of amount of energy actually stored, relatively compact, no special maintenance required, and a service life of 10 to 20 years.

Aerospatiale now intends to expand its line of such devices with units capable of storing 1 to 2 KW for 10-15 minutes as emergency power sources for electronic data processing centers. More powerful storage units of 5 to 10 KW are also under study. These kinetic energy storage devices are being marketed in France by Thomson-Auxilex, the supplier of the system's electronics.

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POLITICAL

BELGIUM

ROLE OF SPITAELS IN STEEL ISSUE, GOVERNMENT FALL

Brussels POURQUOI PAS? in French 24 Sep 81 pp 4-7

/Article: "Guy Spitaels: The Man of Steel"

/Text/ And there it is! Mark Eyskens' brilliant team has packed its bags. We will hardly weep for it. In 5 months, it had offered us only resignations and retreats, hesitations and widespread ossification, with, as a final climax, a scandalous budget, completely riddled with accommodations and lack of imagination, but also inspired by a tax-minded, sterilizing spirit with a bureaucratic, socialist tint. Implicitly: an end to freedom of enterprise and all social assistance.

The hostility to the budgetary monster was surprising in its extent, which drove the PSCVP [Social Christian Party] to revise the bad joke. To its great surprise, the PS /Socialist Party/ did not succeed in imposing its wishes, and from that time on, it tried to slip away. A debate on the issues, in fact, would have brought to light its deep conservatism, especially with regard to the well known production costs and index reform, as well as its complete and voluntary alienation from the needs of the FGTB /General Rederation of Labor of Belgium/.

Always cold and realistic, Mr Spitaels has wanted to look for a more sensational point of fall: the steel industry in an autonomist and community setting. Following his upward dream, he chose to become the first in the single Walloon. Which Walloon, moreover? The future, in any event, will judge what was essentially a tactical, personal step.

These days Mr Spitaels is claiming to have acted in perfect agreement with his party. To be sure, nobody at the Office dared complain either Monday or Tuesday, but how can one explain the curious fluctuations of the Kernkabinet on Thursday, when a solution for the steel industry was accepted by the Socialist vice-premier, Mr Mathot and by the minister of justice, Philippe Moureaux?

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Later, and after having been blasted by the president of the party, they backed out without false pride. After all, it was just a question of habit for them. To Mr Martens IV's anguish, the vice premiers, one of them the same Mr Mathot, had accepted a relative modification in price-indexing. The Spitaelian ax took away all his illusions on this subject.

Thus, we repeat, the desire for a split was, again this time, Guy Spitael's prerogative.

In truth, the president of the PS seems to have calculated perfectly the risk of the undertaking. How could he not know that in the case of a split, he would be isolated from the PSC /Christian Social Party/ and the CVP /Social Christian Party/, and also from the Flemish socialists? No matter, Mr Spitaels has now many other winning cards on his side. Is he not comforted by the support of the Walloon unions who wish to cross swords, a question of stirring up a demoralized rank-and-file? The Walloon Festivals will take a curious turn . . . And then, he will have the satisfaction of also being supported by self-administrating RW /Walloon Rally/ of Henri Mordant . . .

So what! Since Monday, and with the political politicking, the Belgians scarcely know what has happened, other than noting that the gap between the two communities is widening more and more, thus making the task even harder for those who, like those in the PSC or the Flemish socialists, are still trying to put up some ridiculous footbridge.

Having said this, the major turn taken by Mr Spitaels could perhaps have the advantage of clarifying things definitively.

A last question, finally: what will happen tomorrow? What formula can we think of in order to save the little we still have left? A non-traditional government such as Henri Simonet wished for in POURQUOI PAS? of 10 September? It is too early, and everyone does not yet see clearly the extent of the wreck.

Elections, then?

To be realistic, this solution would be no less dangerous. Public opinion, in fact, is fed up to the teeth with politicians' politics, their schemes, and their settlements of account. The anonymity of the polling booth could permit it to avenge itself cruelly on the puppets of the Rue de la Loi by favoring to the hilt the makeshift and chance parties.

After all, would that not be justice? How can one accept without revolt these "partycratic" jokes, these demagogic defiances of which all are capable and which have left this poor country in a complete structural, economic, and social crisis, without even a coherent plan for the 1982 budget? This scandalous exhibition will sooner or later receive its just retribution.

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But we are not there yet, and the farce will continue in full swing in the days to come. For these men, no lesson is ever profitable. Nevertheless, it would be in their interest to read the following pages, where Paul Colson describes the financial mechanism of the steel crisis. For his part, Jacques Schepmans is concerned with another mechanism. The one that is stirring up Guy Spitaels . . .

"For 15 years I visited Dr Jekyll. Today at noon I met Mr Hyde." This is how an impudent socialist, one quite close to Mr Spitaels, however, summarized the Sunday debate between the president of the PS and Leo Tindemans.

And, in fact, tense, fascinated by himself, dry as a stick, Mr Spitaels presented the extraordinary picture of a cold demagogue. To be sure, he was not wrong in letting the CVP know that the time for compromise had long since passed, but behind his Savonarde and destroying angel act, it was easy to perceive other intentions.

Having arrived at a summit meeting of his "marketing" personnel, Mr Spitaels was already preparing for a new level in his frictional ascent.

This confrontation was a most haunting experience. On the right, a Tindemans still not calmed down from his million European votes, opposite a Spitaels, fascinated by the results of the "Political Barometer"* and persuaded that, this time, he could take the liberty of doing anything.

A marvelous performance of a "political show" with these two men who have or had evil advisers who led them into these demagogic excesses to which their basic personalities already made them so vulnerable.

On this Sunday, Mr Spitaels did not do things in a small way. Full of the Apocalypse and hellfire, alternating with threats and sub-nationalistic chauvinism, he was exemplary.

He left nothing to chance. Not even blackmail. The community aggressiveness was there, for the use of the voter, but also to impress the Palais, where he has tried for so long to be thought of as the highest recourse. This was very clever insofar as Laeken, by definition, is somewhat traumatized by this kind of outlook. Finally! Mr Spitaels took refuge in the old and always effective trick, street blackmail.

This style of threat has always been part of the socialist weaponry. In 1950, in 1960, in short, each time that the socialists were dismissed to obscurity, they caused strikes and demonstrations with

*See POURQUOI PAS? of 17 September, where our Barometer designated Mr Spitaels as Mister Wallonia.

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the temperament of a band of rioters who, having been assembled from nothing, are even more formidable.

Today, with the gravity of a licentious sexton, Mr Spitaels is doing the same thing. By pretending, of course, to deplore it, and by giving numerous warnings, he is succeeding in raising those specters which will cause the socialists to be persuaded to impose their law: a community escalade descending immediately upon the followers of separatism, and, as a bonus, the violence of social disturbances.

At least we are warned!

Let's be accurate. If, behind all this, this socialist condottiere /captain of a band of adventurers/ had no underhanded, ulterior motives, we would be quite satisfied to see the CVP, and particularly Leo Tindemans, made fun of in this way.

It is true that today's Flanders is domineering, sure of itself, brutal, and arrogant. It is true that for a long time the political, as well as the financial, power has wanted to impose on Wallonia an unbearable economic dependence.

But is the extreme radicalism of Mr Spitaels the solution? And how can we not doubt his disinterestedness? Everything, in fact, proves to us that the president of the PS wants to stir up, then exploit, the steel crisis, in order to strengthen both his own and his party's identification, which, moreover, have become confused in his eyes.

Let us analyze the tactics of this senator-mayor of Ath:

Mr Spitaels is now raging about the lack of respect for the promises made regarding applying the Financial Plan for the steel industry. Correct! But why does he maintain a similar silence as soon as it comes to applying the Social Plan?

Among the conditions for rectifying the steel industry, there were, in fact, provisions for a release for 5,000 jobs and a decrease in the total wages of 10 percent.

Between 1 January and 1 June 1981, personnel increased in Lieges by 73, and decreased only by 354 in Charleroi. As for the total wage figure, it has not decreased but increased by 9 percent.

Thus, we bet that Mr Spitaels, while staying firm on his positions and holding a sacred cow in addition, ought not to be unhappy to lay today's failure at the door of the Flemish, the PSC, the bankers . . . It will permit him to gloss over the troubling Social Plan and above all not to have to confront Jean Gayetot or the happy Gillon, the bridges of Walloon trade unionism over this slippery ground.

From this point on, the purity of socialist intentions, and also their desire to succeed, leave us somewhat skeptical. Other examples?

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Whereas it had been agreed that the proceedings of the management committee of Cockerill-Sambre would remain strictly confidential, so as to separate the purely economic factors from the political concerns, the PS leadership was informed of these proceedings and called a secret (sic) meeting on Thursday, 10 September of all the socialist leaders. It was then--and under pressure from the "boss" of the Lieges metalworkers, Mr. Gillon, who knows that if the steel industry slows down, he will lose his power--that the PS made its decision to demand that the production level be maintained at 8.5 million tons, exactly as--it must be admitted--the government plan specified.

From this point on, with absolute duplicity, the socialists pretended to confuse production capacity and production level.

To be sure, everyone agreed that, for Cockerill-Sambre, it was necessary to maintain the possibility of producing 8.5 million tons of raw steel, in order to be able to meet all requests, in case of a cyclical revival.

On the other hand, as a purely administrative matter, it was necessary to organize production in such a way that the industrial entity lost the least amount of money possible, while still taking into account the economic and social concerns. To lose the least amount of money possible? When the socialists hear the words stabilization or reduction of finances, they bring out their Spitaels. Which did not fail to happen.

It was from then on a flight forward. Wanting to leave no stone unturned, the socialists pulled out all the stops. Attacking Mr Davignon, who looks at the problem on a European level, bombing the European People's Party for being guilty of wanting to rationalize the steel industry, calling upon the excited Anne-Marie Lizin to do this, blaming the government for the decision of the Swiss banks not to bring in the money to breath a little life into Cockerill-Sambre until the end of October, these men from the Boulevard de l'Empereur are indulging in a frenzied mixture of conditioning public opinion.

In truth, if it had not been the steel industry, Mr Spitaels would have found something else. Let us simply say that today, these circumstances seemed to him more favorable.

He is convinced, first of all, that his all-round radicalism and his constant ultimatums have a bearing on the Walloon public. Our Political Barometer has no doubt been able to reassure him on this subject.

By causing a crisis that could lead to elections, he thinks he has found the best combat ground. Thus he will do everything to stir up a community passion among the crowd.

By hiding behind the steel question, he will avoid taking responsibility in the economic and social areas regarding the necessary

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financial stabilization, government expenses, or production costs. By making the debate into a passionate issue, he hopes to succeed in erasing all those real problems to which the PS, in the spirit of one-upmanship which it has now made its own, cannot give a satisfactory answer.

Thus, this identifying image of an uncompromising Walloon nationalist, of a Sainte-Genevieve facing the Flemish barbarians, and of an unwavering protector of the trade unions can only, according to him, strengthen his position as head of the PS and later (at least he hopes so) as head of a Walloon state.

But wait! Would not an autonomous Wallonia, in the hands of an unshared government, run the risk from then on of becoming totally subject to these favorite fantasies of the socialists?

When Mr Spitaels attacks the bankers, he does indeed take the precaution of rejecting the outright nationalization of credit, but . . .

It is now permissible to imagine a Wallonia that would humor the Rosenkavalier under the pretext of autonomism. Therefore, Wallonia must seek out a desperately fragile balance.

If we must wish it to be resolute, strong, aware of itself and its destiny, and resolved not to yield to certain Flemish demands, as a thoroughly-understood regionalism would require, will it also be able to spurn this intense adventure into which it is in danger of being led by the confused ambition of one man and one dominerring party?

Mr Spitaels' spectacular offensive will, in any event, have had the advantage of opening the eyes of some people as to the future of this surprising, Spitaelian regional-socialism. And for that reason, at least, it will not have been useless.

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POLITICAL

SPAIN

BASQUE COMMUNISTS DIVIDED ON MERGER WITH OTHER LEFTISTS

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 28 Sep 81 pp 31-32

[Article by Ander Landaburu: "Basque Communists, Unite!"]

[Text] The rapprochement between the EIA [Basque Revolutionary Party] and the EPK [Basque Communist Party] was known, especially after their respective congresses last spring. However, no observer anticipated such a rapid convergence process. The unification of the Basque communists with the purpose of creating a new party of the Basque "Marxist" and "nondogmatic" left had the effect of a bombshell in Basque political circles.

Events picked up momentum in 48 hours. Thus, when the leaders of the PCE-[Spanish Communist Party]-EPK were notified that the Biltzar Tipia--central committee of the EIA--was to meet right away to plan a session of the Constituent Congress of the projected political party by the end of the year, the secretary general of the Basque communists, Roberto Lerxchundi, urgently summoned the party's executive.

After several hours of discussion and by a vote of 36 in favor and 13 against with one abstention, the communists decided to ask the patriots of the EIA for a stint of negotiations with the firm resolve of helping create a new political group "out of this party which we seek, one that will be an independent party, of a fully sovereign Basque character, in order to establish the necessary links with like-minded political forces in the whole of Spain and Europe."

This surprising document was sent urgently to the capital of Guipuzcoa Province where the EIA's executive met a few hours later. In the face of the communist request, it decided to postpone its Constituent Congress to a new date. In its reply the executive explained to the Basque communists that it did so in the face of "the need to bring other forces into the Constituent Congress of the Basque Left [EE] for the creation of a class party that would be broad, of the masses and nondogmatic, that would overcome in theory and practice the historic division between Socialists and communists in the working calss."

Even though it was executed in its nearly final phase hurriedly, this agreement is nevertheless the result of a long process of reflection within which both the EIA and the PCE-EPK have strived to overcome the historic division between nationalists and communists. Following the elections to the Basque parliament in 1980 where the unquestionable hegemony of the Basque right was brought out and, especially, the large electoral abstention of immigrant workers--potentially leftist voters--some

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of these organizations, together with intellectuals and independent professionals brought up the possibility of creating a new dynamic to face this division and fragmentation of the left in the Basque Country.

Accordingly, in their respective congresses held last spring, both the PCE-EPK and the EIA already suggested the need to strive in this direction, as Mario Onaindia, the head of the EIA, confirmed recently. "In this process the historic divisions between nationalists and non-nationalists and between Socialists and communists must be overcome to endow this possible unity with a new dimension that may be transformed into the revised platform of a nondogmatic left."

On its part, in the Basque Communist Party congress, a faction dubbed "nationalist" and headed by Roberto Lerxchundi achieved significant success in receiving a comfortable majority vis-a-vis the "working class" faction represented by the veteran leader Ramon Ormazabal and the head of the Workers Committees [CC.OO.], Tomas Tueros, who follows the line of Santiago Carrillo.

It is with the two congresses that the rapprochement was initiated between the two parties which considered that the overlapping points in their political strategy for the Basque Country were more important than the divergences. "This overlap is understood," Lerxchundi told CAMBIO 16, "in the sense that Basque national freedom itself is linked to the emancipation of the workers."

Differences With the Adherents of Eurocommunism and the Workers Committees

However, in the parallel paths covered by the two political organizations these past few months and now with the merger plan, there is no agreement on everything. Thus, the theme of Eurocommunism and the labor union problem can become the major issues of the forthcoming discussions.

For Mario Onaindia, Eurocommunism has failed to the extent that it has strived to struggle for democratic socialism with a party tied to "Leninist or Stalinist defects" even though he recognized later that the Basque Communist Party has recently evolved considerably in this field, moving closer to the EIA's line.

Neither does it escape anyone's notice that this process of unity or fusion can have important consequences in the labor union policy which both parties are promoting now, one of them backing the Workers Committees and the other the STV [Solidarity of Basque Workers].

Both Onaindia and Lerxchundi avoided at this time coming out clearly on the issue even though the secretary general of the PCE-EPK noted that "no one will neglect the securing of instrumentalities which the working class has acquired. In every way, we shall avoid a break in the labor union movement and shall aim at defending those means that would make it possible to secure unity without concerting symbols into patriotism."

No matter what the final result, the agreement between the two leftist parties has generated for now an enormous degree of expectation in the Basque political world. Its impact has become evident among all the other political groupings which, with interest or concern, are very mindful of the progress in the negotiations.

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In UCD [Democratic Center Union] circles, both in Madrid and in the Basque Country, the fact is viewed with interest and positively despite ideological differences. For the Basque members of the UCD this convergence can allow a significant explanation of the Basque political process, a clarification. But above all, it is an important advance in the pacification of the Basque Country.

In this respect a UCD parliamentarian from Vizcaya Province, on recalling the words of the minister of interior, Juan Jose Roson, on his recent trip to Bilbao, told this periodical: "For the minister and for the UCD here, a stable Basque left is fundamental and the key to peace. Both the truce of the police and militia and the recent and constant charges or denunciations by the Basque Left against violence are a major effort for the normalization of life in the Basque Country.

This plan for the merger of the PCE-EPK and the EIA nevertheless preoccupied other important sectors of Basque political life, such as the Socialist sector and the nationalist majority of the PNV [Basque Nationalist Party]. While the Socialists refused to make declarations and went into a profound silence, thereby demonstrating their surprise and fear before this new leftist pact which can deny them electoral strength, the nationalists of the PNV, also preoccupied, stressed the Marxist character of the convergence and started to maneuver to prevent a sizable loss of influence in the ELA (STV) [Solidarity of Basque Workers] trade union.

A place where this process is being followed with genuine interest is among parties of the Basque left such as ANV [Basque Nationalist Action], ESEI [Basque Socialist Coordinating Force], and others which, despite their scant electoral success, continue to have influence in the cultural and intellectual life of the Basque Country. These are typical parties that could see themselves become integrated in this aggregating process spearheaded for the time being only by the Basque Communist Party and the EIA.

However, this minieuphoria of some groups of the Basque left is not shared by all the communists of the Basque Country. The challenge in the party was not long in coming. The minority faction, called "unionist," loyal to the veteran of the apparatus, Ramon Ormazabal, targeted its initial arrows at Roberto Leroxchundi and his allies.

While this faction, which enjoys no more than about 30 percent of the votes in the party, does not represent the majority, its influence continues to be significant among the leftist fringe of the Estuary of Bilbao where Tomas Tueros and his colleagues control the Workers Committees and where many former activists have always maintained a critical posture vis-a-vis anything that was redolent of the Basque movement.

For Ramon Ormazabal the decision and the document of his party's central committee represent a flagrant infringement of the agreements of the Fourth Congress and "a deceit of the party's grassroots." Visibly displeased and pained by what he called haste, the old communist leader noted that "in the preceding congress no one was authorized to anticipate or promote the separation of the Basque Communist Party from its Spanish counterpart.

In this respect the critics in this faction have been numerous, strongly represented among the left in Alava Province and in a group from Guipuzcoa Province headed by Ignacio Latierro.

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Disciplinary Measures

War was declared between the two factions, and while the pro-Santiago Carrillo faction of the EPK proposes the urgent need for a special congress with the purpose of clarifying the positions in the party and seeing to what extent the steps taken by the central committee for a convergence with the Basque Left or the EIA enjoy support among the grassroots, the individuals connected with Roberto Lerxchundi have announced that they will not tolerate lack of discipline and that they will make the appropriate decisions when they summon the provincial committees.

On reasserting its posture, the central committee of the Basque communists plans to move the process forward "no matter what." In this purpose it has been encouraged by the historic Basque leader, Juan de Astigarrabia, who lives in Cuba today.

Minister of government of the Basque region in 1936, Astigarrabia was expelled from the communist party at the beginning of the war because of his "nationalist sympathies" even though he was subsequently reinstated. Today, according to PCE-EPK sources, he would be prepared to return to the Basque Country and confront his old party adversary, Ramon Ormazabal.

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POLITICAL

SPAIN

BUSINESS INTERESTS SEEN AS BACKING CALVO SOTELO IN UCD

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 21 Sep 81 pp 31, 33

[Article by Anxton Sarasqueta]

[Text] The situation of the Democratic Center Union (UCD) and the government has entered a delicate phase in the vicious circle in which the different centrist forces are moving, without finding any way out of the crisis.

The "war" being waged among centrists has aborted the first moves by President Calvo Sotelo to solve the crisis.

Given this internal situation, and the offensive by the opposition in the first parliamentary debates, the head of the government has been forced to delay the press conference that he had publicly announced on 31 August for when he returned from vacation.

Amid the parliamentary debates on such key issues as colza and NATO, and as the kickoff of the electoral campaign in Galicia approaches, the president is confronted with two immediate problems which will have a decisive impact not only on his own future, but also on the collective political life of the country.

The problems are the government crisis, and the dilemma of whether Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo will receive full UCD support when it comes time to take the reins of government and prepare for the upcoming general elections.

The members of the cabinet have begun a feverish race to present their respective reports on their activities, which is interpreted as an unequivocal sign of an impending cabinet shake-up.

Ministers such as Rodolfo Martin Villa, minister of territorial administration, Education Minister Juan Antonio Ortega, and Minister of Culture Inigo Cavero (the latter bearing "Guernica") have done so in recent days; Minister of Public Works and Urbanism Luis Ortiz will attain his principal objective this 21 September with the signing of the framework agreement on construction.

It was Ortiz himself, in a conversation with CAMBIO 16, who interpreted the words of the chief of government as meaning a postponement of the shake-up to "sometime soon."

This crisis will undoubtedly be influenced (with the resultant tossing around of names, which has already begun) by the internal conflicts of the UCD, and clearly

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by the resistance and opposition Calvo Sotelo has encountered among Suarez' followers and some men with Social Democratic leanings.

The Duke Suarez emerged from the shadows this week to state publicly his position of continuity with respect to the tack that triumphed in the centrist congresses, and with respect to the pressure for change emanating from the president's office and those surrounding him.

This is a struggle for change in the UCD, between the pragmatic elements who set the pace for the transition of power, and the ideological currents that are rising up out of the ashes.

Liberals and Christian Democrats support a plan devised by Calvo Sotelo to place the center in a liberal, rightist position. This support implies access to some positions of power within the party and the government, and the pragmatic elements such as former President Adolfo Suarez and other leaders in his area, who hold the principal offices of the party, are reluctant to give up that power.

This confrontation, in view of the prospect of a Socialist victory predicted by the latest opinion polls, has gone beyond the UCD's sphere of influence and has sparked a strong reaction by an economic power within the business sector.

Thus, using the platform provided by his reelection as president of the employers' association CEOE [expansion unknown], Carlos Ferrer Salat did not hesitate to make a serious and severe warning to the government, its president and his party, asserting among other things that if the centrist leaders do not succeed in overcoming "the illogical concept of the center as a mixture of disparate and sometimes opposing ideologies, . . . we foresee an inevitable and quick electoral defeat."

Ferrer Solat, who has no doubt that "many, many Spanish businessmen and their families, using their undeniable social influence, brought many of the voters to the polls to hand (the UCD) its victory on two occasions," dialectically excoriated the centrist leaders who "are trying to fill Socialist or Communist positions."

The attack by the CEOE president on those of the center-left has two targets: Adolfo Suarez and Francisco Fernandez Ordenez.

Thus no one was surprised at Adolfo Suarez' response to Ferrer Salat's idea of a possible Socialist victory and the need for a swing to the right in the government party.

The CEOE has the option, according to its top leader, of pursuing a liberal-conservative political objective. At the same time, Ferrer Salat is trying to uproot the middle-of-the-road Socialists by accusing them of false moderation.

But Ferrer Salat's political rally is just the beginning of a formal offensive for the reorganization of the right by party members and the business sector "in view of the upcoming autonomy and legislative elections." Hours later, after hearing this analysis in more measured tones, as befits the atmosphere of the Palace of Moncloa, President Calvo Sotelo received repeated assurances of support from

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Ferrer Salat. At the same time, within the UCD a strategy was devised with two objectives: to fence in Adolfo Suarez and his men, and to strengthen the position of the chief executive as the undisputed leader of the center.

To bring together liberals, Social Democrats, Martin Villa followers, men who have moved in Social Democratic circles, groups such as the so-called "young Turks" and other independents, and get them to back Calvo Sotelo, is one of the schemes afoot to limit Suarez' influence on the executive committee and the party leadership.

It is within this context that one should consider, for example, the meetings held recently between Marcelino Oreja, the government's current delegate to the Basque Country and a prominent member of the Christian Democrat family, and the "young Turks," a group which includes about 30 parliamentarians.

This operation involves drawing in relevant independent centrists through the government, a change in the distribution of government posts to provide incentives for supporting Calvo Sotelo, and guaranteeing at least neutrality on the part of Agustin Rodriguez Sahagun and Rafael Calvo, party president and secretary general, respectively. Either they have come under Suarist influence, or they have not had enough authority to ensure total party support for the president of the government.

Martin Villa, a man who appears to be a key figure in tipping the centrist scales, has maintained a subtle position on the inclusion of independents in the government, as a function of their names; he has a sort of wait-and-see attitude.

The mechanisms being considered by Calvo Sotelo to turn the terms of influence toward the groups that support the chief executive, involve achieving a consensus among the centrist "barons" or, in a bolder move, holding a special congress.

Distinguished members of what was termed the "critical sector" at last January's congress in Palma de Mallorca, made up of Christian Democrats and liberals, are betting on the latter alternative.

Christian Democrats such as Jose Luis Alvarez, Oscar Alzaga, Marcelino Oreja. . . (some of them have expressly confirmed this to CAMBIO 16) do not believe the committees of prominent figures provide a viable solution, and are opting for a special congress to be held before the general elections.

Three Keys

Nevertheless, during recent weeks the centrist "barons" have held intense negotiations to achieve some points of agreement among the different tendencies. They have not reached a definitive consensus, although in the words of a minister close to Calvo Sotelo, there are promising signs.

But the final solution to the crisis in the upper echelons of the government party will not be confirmed objectively until the results are in on the three key tests that Calvo Sotelo will have to take during the next 30 days.

After the meeting of the political council of 18 September, the date selected for the official release of the results of negotiations among the centrist leaders,

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according to party President Agustin Rodriguez Sahagun, the regional elections for the Galician parliament will be at hand, and sooner or later (depending on when the NATO debate in Cortes ends) there will be a cabinet shake-up.

These events will determine the outcome of the centrist crisis, which is anxiously awaited by all politicians because of its impact on democratic stability and on all other forces.

Even the opposition leader, Felipe Gonzalez (see interview on page 34), recognizes the political importance of solving the centrist crisis. After the most recent meeting of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) federal committee, that party's secretary general reiterated the Socialists' decision not to force the fall of the government and to maintain the pacts to cover the legislature until the end, in 1983.

This promise not to harass the government until the ultimate consequences (with the exception of the dialectical confrontations from the benches in Parliament) is really a margin of confidence which Calvo Sotelo can rely on to give him an opportunity to turn to his party and repair the cracks in the system created by attempted coups and terrorist acts.

However, in the long range, the Socialist strategy is designed to undermine the government. It is within this context that they have harassed seven ministers in the colza and NATO debates, while trying to prevent changes in the cabinet.

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POLITICAL

SPAIN

SUAREZ VS CALVO SOTELO: ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 28 Sep 81 pp 24-29

[Article by Anxton Sarasqueta]

[Text] The Duke of Suarez does not think the trajectory of his successor, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, is clear; without great confrontations, he has launched a discreet offensive against the current resident of the Palace of Moncloa. He did meet with Calvo Sotelo this week in another effort to reconcile their positions.

Adolfo Suarez, who will turn 49 this week (on 9-25-81), has political aspirations for the 1987 elections. He discovered Calvo Sotelo as his successor, and now has control over the party at local levels as well as within the party apparatus. He wants to make sure that the current president does not deviate from the center left, where the decisive votes will be in the 1983 elections. Suarez, who has gotten progressively further away from Calvo Sotelo, although the two maintain appearances, is certain that the key to the political future lies in his hands. With the control of a large part of the Executive Branch; with the support of Party President Agustin Rodriguez Sahagun and Secretary General Rafael Calvo Ortega (known in political circles as the "Dynamic Duo"); with decisive influence in the majority of local and provincial committees in the party, Adolfo Suarez is convinced that if the current structure of the party is maintained he will once again become the key man in Spanish politics in 1983. According to a basic analysis, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) will not be able to obtain an absolute majority in the coming elections, and will have to govern with a sector of the Democratic Center Union (UCD). That sector will be the one headed by Suarez, with 60 or 70 indispensable deputies who are loyal to the duke and not to Calvo Sotelo.

The people of Arlaban, headquarters of the government party in Madrid, where the leaders of the UCD and what has become known as "the machine" can be found, are convinced that the center is populist.

And they are convinced that populism is embodied in Adolfo Suarez, now a duke, honorary president of the UCD and, for the past 5 years, executor of the transition policy in the Palace of Moncloa.

Populism is not a definite ideology, but one which stems from the charismatic figure of a leader.

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Today, between visits to Latin America and rest periods at his home in Avila, Suarez is ensconced in his law office on Calle Antonio Maura in Madrid, around the corner from the historic Ritz Hotel and 200 meters from the Congress of Deputies.

With bodyguards situated in the cars parked by the kiosk on the street, and two National Police officers guarding the entrance at the front door, the former president's office is on the first floor, decorated with modern furniture in light hues and predominantly abstract paintings on the walls.

His personality, which embodies centrist populism, places Suarez at the service of a political sector known as the center-left. According to Party President Agustin Rodriguez Sahagun, he is assured of 20 percent of the vote, a figure which could account for 50 deputies, one-third of the number the UCD currently has in the lower house.

The offensive by the rightist sectors of recent weeks, however, demanding that the UCD and the government take a step to the right to place the party in a center-right position and even form an alliance with the "great right," with Manuel Fraga's party, has forced Suarez' men to define their situation at this point in the Spanish political spectrum known as the center-center. It is quite undecipherable now.

Center-Center

Rodriguez Sahagun, at his press conference last week, stated that another result of the scores of surveys conducted recently was that 23.5 percent of the electorate would vote in favor of the center-center.

Suarez and his most loyal followers, such as former Vice-President Fernando Abril and former Minister Rafael Arias, as well as the party "machine," have a majority on the party's executive bodies (the executive committee and the political council) and thus control them. They defend that leftist area of the center which borders on socialism and could at times be confused with it.

The fact that a recent survey indicated that the highest number of UCD voters were between the lower-middle and lower classes (see CAMBIO 16 No. 509), below the Socialists, explains these intrusions into the left.

However, it is generally agreed that Suarez was responsible for the UCD's victory in the last elections of 1979, thanks to his appearance on television a few hours before the polls opened with a message of terror in view of the threat posed to the country by the possibility of the Socialist and Marxist "reds" reaching power.

So what is populism? How is populism applied in political practice? Can populism represent the Spanish right in democratic institutions?

Along with the charismatic figure of Suarez, the self-made man, the brave man with hard lines in his face, we have the voter who is over 30, low-income, Catholic and very Catholic in more than 80 percent of all cases, and the party activist placed in some job or professional post because of his loyalty to the party apparatus. There is a whole network of interests that in most cases stem from the administration and the old machine of the movement, from top to bottom.

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This political-social spectrum is equivalent to that of the Argentine Justicialist movement led by Juan Domingo Peron until his death; or that of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of Mexico. There is no equivalent in Western Europe.

The present UCD is not the modern, advanced right of classical lines that exists in Western European countries.

Actually, it is a far cry from the Labourites and Conservatives of England, or the German Social Democrats, much less the Christian Democrats of the land of beer and sausages. It is even distant from the French farmer who votes for Mitterrand and the Renault executive who goes for Giscard or Chirac.

When the issue of the UCD joining an ideological International, whether liberal or Christian Democrat, has been brought up on a European level, Suarez has rejected the idea, despite internal and external pressures. The current president of the European Commission of the EEC, liberal Gaston Thorn, laments that the then chief of the Spanish Government tried to convince him that the trend in Europe in the coming years would be toward the center.

Spanish populism not only lacks a definite ideology, but it also manifests a certain repugnance for all ideologies, whether because of low levels of education among most people, or due to other factors inherent in the social structure and the environment, as well as the historical context.

Thus we have the paradox that the Spanish democratic right, which is included in the two classical ideologies of Christian Democracy and liberalism, supported a party and a leader that are in another orbit; a leader, Suarez, whom they later abandoned and pressured from all sides until he had to step down.

Some of the centrist "barons" who know Suarez best and who have worked with him in his governments, say that one of his principal qualities is that "he knows his job like no one else."

To know one's job means, in Suarez' case, to know the workings of the administration inside and out, to spend more hours than anyone else studying political adversaries, planning strategies, winning people with personal charm, and buying loyalty. Audacity is one of his essential traits, which explains his surprise move to legalize the Communist Party to set an example during the transition period. His lack of commitment to a set ideology gives him greater room to maneuver with his adversaries, which has sometimes provoked scorn and disdain among them; such has been the case with people ranging from Felipe Gonzalez to Oscar Alzaga.

Knowing his job led him to plan his departure from government while maintaining control of the party, taking advantage of one of the maneuvers of his party adversaries, who were then known as the "critical sector." They advocated the separation of the party presidency from the government presidency, trying to isolate Suarez in Moncloa and control him from the party machine. Indeed, that is what Suarez has done to Calvo Sotelo in trying to divert him from the center which embodies populism.

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But it is obvious that Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, because of his personality, education, background and ties, is alienated from Suarez-style populism, despite the union that has kept them working together in the government and the party in the past few years. Those who know Calvo Sotelo in real life say that not only is he alienated from populism, but he feels a basic scorn for it.

Calvo Sotelo is the person who today embodies the interests of the more or less progressive right which treads the line between liberal and conservative. It is obliged to be more reformist than progressive in a country like Spain, which remains aloof from the progress of the European powers.

On the extremes, liberals and Christian Democrats who support Calvo Sotelo launched a genuine offensive against Suarez nearly a year ago, when the "critical sector" began its operation and managed to defeat Suarez. Suarez and his men, allied sometimes with the Social Democrats, have not given an inch in control of the party, and have not been afraid to tell the Christian Democrats to leave the party if they don't like it.

Two Spains

In the middle of all this, Calvo Sotelo is faced with the dilemma of having to prepare and lead a cohesive electoral campaign for 1983, with progressive rightist features (rejecting the "great right"), and coming to grips with the possibility of a successful and forceful Socialist Party, as indicated by the polls. A right without Francoist complexes, with an unequivocally democratic image, economically effective, and socially progressive, modern and imaginative. An ideological right, not obscured by Suarez' populism. At the same time, however, it is certain that a division of the party would mean the crashing defeat of the right.

Reconciling all those interests is the challenge that faces Calvo Sotelo in his struggle with Suarez. This confrontation holds the key to the centrist crisis, and sooner or later will force the current president to enter the political arena and put his cards on the table.

Suarez is an avid player of poker and "mus" (Socialist Maria Izquierdo jokingly calls him the "Mississippi Gambler"), and those who have sat at the table with him assert that he plays hard and takes high risks. Suarez applies this practice to politics, especially in pursuit operations.

This reporter has heard first-hand Suarez' ideas about the need to keep the current political spectrum, with two large national parties and two other extremist minorities, also on a national scale, such as the Popular Alliance and the Communist Party. For Suarez, to move these pieces toward a more accentuated bipartisanship is to create tensions that are hard to contain, and to return to the two Spains.

Based on this analysis, and with the conviction that neither Christian Democrats nor liberals have the remotest possibility of winning general elections on their own, Suarez and his men feel they can be inflexible in many situations.

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He is also certain that in a minority system such as the present one, in which he could without too much trouble garner that figure which represents over 50 deputies, he could control the most valuable votes in Parliament. In de facto terms, and from within, this party can become the linchpin that can tip the scales one way or another. The PSOE would need his support for a coalition government, as would the rightist parties.

How will Calvo Sotelo react to this situation? Will the backing of the Church, capital, the Christian Democrats, the liberals, some converted Social Democrats and the independents won over by the promise of a new plan or the guarantee of power, in addition to the political capital he has built up during his time in office, be sufficient?

The weakness of Spanish democracy and the threats posed by possible coups and terrorism, demand that political leaders have a sense of responsibility, which translates into avoiding radical stands that could become destabilizing factors.

This assumes some unity within the UCD, and limits the risks of a falling out.

Calvo Sotelo's strategy for making a pact with Suarez involves reversing the present terms of force, based on the support he has, and opening up the UCD to a system of ideological currents (where he has greater support), bringing into the party men of his ilk, from the economy, from the university. . . , who would protect him before, during and after the elections.

The middlemen, possibly Rodolfo Martin Villa, Landelino Lavilla or Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, can form alliances with Suarez if they do not receive the trust and compensation they demand from Moncloa. This is particularly true of the present minister of territorial administration, judging by the stance he took when he was excluded from the president's intimate circle during the crisis that led to the resignation of Fernandez Ordonez.

This is a dramatic duel between two personalities, one of whom (Suarez) recalls that he has won two elections and engineered the transition, and that his party has ridden in his saddle and then named another successor.

Thus, Calvo Sotelo must use what he has in the present to play in the future.

In view of events such as the colza and NATO debates, the Galician elections of 20 October, and the general state budgets, Calvo Sotelo will have to prove his ability to place his own men and set forth guidelines in three key tests in the coming months: the election of the centrist parliamentary spokesman, the cabinet shake-up and the party electoral committee, which is responsible for the slates in the upcoming elections.

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MILITARY

FRANCE

NUCLEAR WAR CIVIL DEFENSE STUDIES SUGGESTED

Paris AIR & COSMOS in French 19 Sep 81 p 41

[Article: "Civil Defense System"]

[Text] Mme Florence d'Harcourt, a member of the National Assembly, requested that the minister of state for interior and decentralization furnish her details of a civil defense system "against the new threats stemming from the adoption of increasingly advanced strategic and tactical weapon systems, and also against the dangers likely to result from the use of enhanced radiation weapons." She also asked the minister "whether it would not be advisable to establish a study group charged with the task of preparing and proposing technical solutions to civil defense problems."

In his reply, the minister explained that, as the official responsible for protection of the civilian population, he makes sure that this protection is taken into account in the formulation of general defense policy. "It is necessary, in fact, to allocate defense outlays equitably and efficiently within an overall budget, the burden of which is acceptable to the nation."

The minister of state revealed that the senior defense official attached to his ministry and his own staff were currently conducting studies on the inventory of existing shelters, construction standards for new buildings, and evacuation of people living near key targets. "Hence establishment of a study group does not appear necessary," the minister concluded.

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